Minister for Local Government, Elliot McAdam, has today announced changes to the Northern Territory’s Cemeteries Act.

The Minister introduced the changes to Parliament this morning, with the new legislation expected to be passed at the end of this week.

“In recent times I have received a number of requests from family members wishing to bury their spouses or family members in allotments which another family member has already been buried in at the Darwin General Cemetery on McMillan’s Road,” said Mr McAdam.

“To date, the Cemeteries Act does not provide me with any power or capacity to retrospectively approve double burials in the Darwin General Cemetery.

“This situation has been the cause of a great deal of distress to many families recently which is why I sought advice on what amendments are required to the Act and Regulations to allow me to approve multiple burials.”

The Darwin General Cemetery was closed by notice in the Gazette with affect from 1 August 2003. The closure meant burials in the Cemetery would cease from that date, except for burials in allotments which had been granted an exclusive right of burial.

Proposed amendments to the Act and the Regulations will enable the Minister for Local Government to approve the burial of a spouse or other family members who are not holders of an exclusive right of burial in respect of the allotment in which their spouse or other family member is already buried in the Darwin General Cemetery.

“This amendment to the Act will allow some peace of mind to families affected by this situation, including at least one family who has been prepared to wait for Government consideration of the proposed amendments to allow the burial of their deceased family member in the Darwin General Cemetery,” said the Minister.

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